

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

1. (Currently Amended) A visiting customer management system including a storage medium carried by a customer, in which at least customer identification information is stored, and a first detector that detects in a non-contact manner the information stored in said storage medium and that is arranged in a shop, comprising:

- a customer information storage device in which at least the customer identification information and a group to which said customer belongs are stored in advance
- a visiting-customer information storage device in which customer identification information detected by said first detector is stored in association with a detection time at which the customer identification information is obtained; and
- a terminal that includes a second detector which detects customer identification information, wherein,
 - when the second detector detects customer identification information, customer identification information for another customer who belongs to a same group as said customer is read from said customer information storage device, and if the customer identification information for said another customer is stored in said visiting-customer information storage device, and if the difference between a detection time at which the customer identification information is detected by the first detector and a detection time at which the customer identification information for said another customer is detected by the first detector falls within a predetermined period of time, said customer is recognized to have come with another member of the group and a reward is given to said customer.

2. (Previously Presented) The visiting customer management system according to Claim 1, wherein said storage medium is a radio-frequency identification (RFID) tag.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Previously Presented) The visiting customer management system according to Claim 5, wherein said second terminal is a point-of-sales (POS) terminal.

7. (Previously Presented) The visiting customer management system according to Claim 1, further comprising a host computer that judges whether a customer has come with another member of a group to which he/she belongs, wherein:

when said second detector detects customer identification information, said terminal reads customer identification information for another customer, who belongs to the same group as said customer, from said customer information storage device, and notifies said host computer of the read customer identification information; and

when the customer identification information for another customer who belongs to the same group as said customer is stored in said visiting-customer information storage device, and the difference between a detection time at which the customer identification information on said customer is detected and a detection time at which the customer identification information for said another customer is detected falls within a predetermined period of time, said host computer judges that said customer has come with another member of the group.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) A visiting customer management system including a storage medium carried by a customer, in which at least customer identification information is stored, and a first detector that detects in a non-contact manner the information stored in said storage medium and that is arranged in a shop, comprising:

a customer information storage device in which the customer identification information and a group to which said customer belongs are stored in advance; and

a terminal including a second detector that detects customer identification information, wherein:

said second detector detects the customer identification information on said customer; and then said first detector obtains customer identification information on other customers that are present in said shop; and

if customer identification information on another member of the group to which said customer belongs corresponds to one of the pieces of customer identification information on the

other customers that are present in said shop, said customer is recognized to have come with another member of the group and a reward is given to said customer.

10. (Previously Presented) The visiting customer management system according to Claim 9, wherein said storage medium is a radiofrequency identification (RFID) tag.

11. (Previously Presented) The visiting customer management system according to Claim 9, wherein said terminal is a point-of-sales (POS) terminal.

12. (Previously Presented) The visiting customer management system according to Claim 9, wherein said first detector is arranged so that it can simultaneously detect the pieces of customer identification information on all the customers that are present in said shop.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) ~~A visiting customer management system including a storage medium carried by a customer, in which at least customer identification information is stored, and a first detector that detects in a non-contact manner the information stored in said storage device and that is arranged in a shop, comprising:~~

~~—— a customer information storage device in which the customer identification information and a group to which said customer belongs are stored in advance;~~

~~—— a terminal including a second detector that detects customer identification information; and~~
The visiting customer management system according to Claim 9, further comprising a host computer, wherein:

when said second detector detects the customer identification information on said customer, said terminal notifies said host computer of the detected customer identification information;

said host computer obtains customer identification information on another customer, who belongs to the same group as said customer, from said customer information storage device, and notifies said terminal of the customer identification information on said another customer; and

if one of pieces of customer identification information for other customers that are present in said shop corresponds to the customer identification information for said another member who belongs to the same group as said customer, said terminal judges that said customer has come with another member of the group ~~and said reward is given to said customer.~~

15. (Previously Presented) The visiting customer management system according to Claim 14, wherein said storage medium is a radiofrequency identification (RFID) tag.

16. (Previously Presented) The visiting customer management system according to Claim 14, wherein said terminal is a point-of-sales (POS) terminal.

17. (Previously Presented) The visiting customer management system according to Claim 14, wherein said first detector is arranged so that it can simultaneously detect the pieces of customer identification information on all the customers in said shop.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Currently Amended) ~~A visiting customer management system including a storage medium carried by a customer, in which at least customer identification information is stored, and a first detector that detects, in a non-contact manner, the information stored in said storage device and that is arranged in a shop, comprising:~~

~~—— a customer information storage device in which the customer identification information and a group to which said customer belongs are stored in advance;~~

~~—— a terminal including a second detector that detects customer identification information;~~

~~and The visiting customer management system according to Claim 9, further comprising a host computer, wherein:~~

~~—— said second detector detects the customer identification information on said customer;~~

~~—— said first detector detects pieces of customer identification information on other customers that are present in said shop;~~

~~wherein said host computer is notified of the detected customer identification information by said second detector and the detected pieces of customer identification information on the other customers that are present in said shop by said first detector; and~~

~~if customer identification information on another member of the group to which said customer belongs corresponds to one of the pieces of customer identification information on the other customers that are present in said shop, said host computer judges that said customer has come with another member of the group and notifies said terminal of the result of the judgment, and a reward is given to said customer.~~

20. (Previously Presented) The visiting customer management system according to Claim 19, wherein said storage medium is a radiofrequency identification (RFID) tag.

21. (Previously Presented) The visiting customer management system according to Claim 19, wherein said terminal is a point-of-sales (POS) terminal.

22. (Previously Presented) A visiting customer management system according to Claim 19, wherein said first detector is arranged so that it can simultaneously detect the customer identification information of all the customers in said shop.

23. (Cancelled)